

What is claimed

1. In an electronic device in a distributed network, a method practiced by an online educational facility comprising the steps of:

5

providing a web page with an embedded software facility as part of an online educational course, wherein said software facility enables a user to create a popup message associated with text that is to be displayed to the user;

10

receiving a request for the web page from a party; and

transmitting the web page to the party in response to the request.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the software facility is an applet.

15

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the web page is an HTML document.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the web page is an XML document.

20

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the software facility is automatically executed after being transmitted to the client.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the software facility executes in a web browser environment.

25

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the software facility performs the following steps when the software facility executes:

receiving the text;

30

defining at least one outlined area in the text where the popup message will appear; and

tracking movement of the cursor and displaying the popup message  
when the cursor enters the at least one outlined area.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the text is sections of computer programming code.

9. A medium for use with an electronic device, said medium containing instructions for  
the electronic device to perform a method that is practiced by an online educational facility,  
comprising the steps of:

providing a web page with an embedded software facility as part of an online  
educational course, wherein said software facility enables a user to create a popup  
message associated with a text that is to be displayed to the user;

receiving a request for the web page from a party; and

transmitting the web page to the party in response to the request.

10. The medium of claim 9, wherein the software facility is an applet.

11. The medium of claim 9, wherein the web page is an HTML:document.

12. The medium of claim 9, wherein the web page is an XML document.

13. An electronic device in a distributed network, said electronic device comprising:

a first module for providing a web page with an embedded software facility,  
wherein said software facility a user to create a popup message associated with a  
textual input to be displayed to the user;

a second module for receiving a request for the web page from a party; and

a transmitting module for transmitting the web page to the party in response to  
the request.

14. The electronic device as recited in claim 18 wherein the documents are markup language documents.

15. The electronic device as recited in claim 18 wherein the markup language include  
5 executable content for viewing images.

16. The electronic device of claim 18, wherein the software facility is an applet.

17. The electronic device of claim 13, wherein the software facility is automatically  
10 executed after being transmitted to the client.

18. The electronic device of claim 17, wherein the software facility executes in a web browser environment.

19. The electronic device of claim 13, wherein the software facility performs the  
15 following steps when the software facility executes:

receiving the text;

20 defining at least one outlined area in the text where the popup message will appear; and

tracking movement of the cursor and displaying the popup message  
when the cursor enters the at least one outlined area.

25 20. The electronic device of claim 19 wherein the text is sections of computer programming code.